



October 15, 2015

## PAN



Over the years, I have seen a lot of versions of the Peter Pan story, but never one like this. This is not your grandmother's Peter Pan. For one thing, Pan is played by an actual young boy and not the way as many of us grew up seeing it – a fully grown adult woman flying across the stage on a visible wire.

We have come so far. Was I the only one who asked why a kid named Peter was being played by a woman named Mary Martin, and again by Cathy Rigby who used to be in the Olympics? Well, all of that nostalgia aside and with no disparagement to those great ladies, this Pan is a fearless, real little boy on a mission.

This is the front story, not the back one. I liked it OK, but I was hoping to love it. And, I have to say the makeup for Hugh Jackman as Blackbeard was a bit odd for my taste. As Blackbeard, Jackman gets to be outrageous, campy and over-the-top in the way only outrageous wigs and costumes can let you. But his opening number felt way out of place in Neverland, but never mind, I'll move on.

Pan, orphaned and looking for his mother makes his way to Neverland – no spoiler alerts here. You all know the story. The grand special effects that we have come to expect were there, but something was missing and I can't say I quite know what it was.

The computer-generated crocodile rocks! The flying ships are sublime, but the characters don't match the majesty of the effects – and they should. If they make a sequel, I might go just out of curiosity to see that crocodile face-off with Captain Hook, who looks and sounds a lot like Indiana Jones in dress and manner.

As Peter, Levi Miller is smart, kind, brave, and comes to believe in himself at just the right moments. And, we believe in him. But the fairy dust ended there for me. I think the movie struggles to try and tell the classic story in a modern way. If they wanted to have a Baz Luhrmann-style film, they should have gotten him to do it. Then, it would have been consistent all the way through. I don't think the little kids got it and the older folks like me were left wondering where Nana the dog, Wendy and the little boys went.

Peter Pan has always been about believing in the magic within yourself and in everything around you. Keep that in mind if you choose to see this version. The magic is still out there, and I still clap my hands for Tinker Bell!!

I can't say that it was a bad movie, just not what I was expecting for the big budget. They could have done a better job. I give *Pan* three golden tickets.

